Join in and Celebrate

SACRED DANCE GUILD

newsletter JOURNAL newsletter

Winter Issue (January) 1983-84 Vol.XXVI No. 2

You're wonderful!

.....The response to the request for directory information and dates for upcoming sacred dance events was overwhelming! Thank you!!! It is fascinating to read all about what you are doing and realize how rich our diversity is and yet how strong the commitment and faith. Whether we work professionally or are "on hold for awhile" the support is powerful. You will receive several pages of dates in the mailing that brings you your 1984 directory. Obviously, we cannot attend most of the events listed, but there are many that will intrigue you. Be sure to write to those people responsible and ask for more information or specifics. By beginning to share and offer specific help to people with common interests, we can strengthen our network of support.

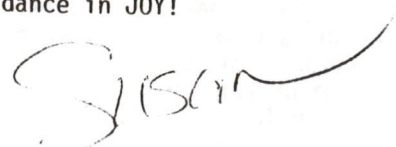
Scholarship information for the August 1984 SACRED DANCE GUILD FESTIVAL in Berkeley, California will be included in the directory mailing. Last year four full-tuition scholarships were given. Watch for the information! The deadline will be April 15, 1984. Susan Gunn in NY will be glad to answer questions.

There is an indescribable uniqueness about Sacred Dance Guild Annual Festivals. To spend a week with others who share a belief in the possibilities of sacred dance is an enriching experience. I hope you will be able to attend. The dates are August 6-10, 1984 and the faculty is excellent! Don't be afraid to ask your church or community to assist you financially. You will be able to bring so much back to them.

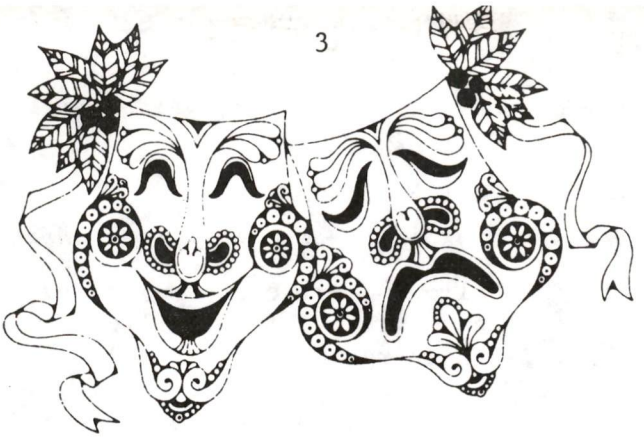
We have not forgotten our commitment to the Midwest. The Sacred Dance Guild will have a special focus at the National Clown, Mime, Puppet, and Dance Ministry workshop in August in South Bend, Indiana. We will have a board meeting, time to meet together, and be the faculty for sacred dance. Doug Adams, Carolyn Deitering, Carla DeSola, Susan Cole, and Carol Vassallo will be teaching classes and/or performing. More information later!

The Connie Fisher Endowment Fund for Sacred Dance will insure that future clergy will be trained in the art of sacred dance. Connie has served as a leader, a model, a scholar, an officer of the Guild, and a friend of sacred dance for many years. We now have the opportunity to thank someone who paved the way for us by sending a check to the Iliff School of Theology (2201 So. University Blvd. Denver, CO 80210). Your gift will be matched dollar for dollar by an anonymous donor! Take this opportunity to enable ministers, priests, and laity to more fully proclaim God's love.

The spirit of the Lord is upon us----
let us dance in JOY!



Susan Cole, President



In this issue.....

From the President	1
Guest Column (Tom and Regina Jackson)	4
Recommended Reading	14
Letters to the Editor	21
JOURNAL (Catholic Report)	27
STRETCHING SACRED DANCE (Festival 1984)	24
"Bit" Reviews	41
Chapter News	45
Preview (Margaret Taylor Doane)	46

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Editorial -

The Spring Issue of the Journal will center its focus on SHARING, sharing your ideas, form, content or choreography on the seasons of Lent and Easter or other items you wish to send.

DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE of the JOURNAL is March 15!

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REMEMBER: "STRETCHING SACRED DANCE - FESTVAL '84" at PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION, BERKELEY, CA. 94709

See Centerfold

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(Ed. Note: The Following article came by way of a telephone call and a letter from Philip Griffith II. See Letters to the Editor.)

"Let Them Praise Him in the Dance" by Tom and Regina Jackson

"One picture has always appeared vividly and clearly as I have imagined the marriage supper of the Lamb; it will most definitely be a time of joy and celebration. Never once has the wedding feast seemed like a somber affair to me. In fact, as the day of the Lord's appearing draws near, excitement builds in our hearts and begs for release. These days in which we live are filled with evidence that the bride is being prepared and adorned to meet her King. Joy is mounting with each stone that is laid and with each new victory. The Lord foretold through Jeremiah (31:4-14) 'I build you once more, and with your tamborines, you will go out dancing gaily.' Here in the midst of a great promise of restoration is a clear image of what this virgin bride will be like. Because of the purity, she can give full expression to her joy through music and dance. Later in this passage, the Lord again reminds us that our sorrows will be transformed into dance involving the whole community.

"In our culture there has been little reason to shout and rejoice for some time. Symptomatic of this depression and lack of vitality is that dancing has almost entirely been lost. Dance has been relegated to the stage for gifted performers or to the bar for lonely singles. On the one hand it has been an artistic idol, placed on such a high pedestal as to be completely out of reach to the average person. On the other,

its effectiveness as a healthy, normal release to a 'techno-bound' society seldom emerges with the exception of the young social outcast. In America especially, the role of men in dance has been regarded as feminine or unacceptable behavior by many, although there have been rays of hope in recent years.

"We have much to learn from the Hebrew model and culture of dance in the Kingdom community. Dance was always their way of life until the dispersion. (At that time there was nothing to be especially happy about.) Through the Hasidic tradition it has in some measure been revived, but not to the over-all glory it had in Israel before the resurrection of the Savior. Likewise, in other nations, ethnic dances have been a means of community involvement, expression, and identity. The question arises, can we as the people and nation of God be a light unto the world without visible expression in that Light? Obviously, the very question is a contradiction of terms, and we need to recognize in dance an important tool to describe our feelings to God and one another. Jesus mentions that when His family is restored, celebration is in order (music and dancing - Luke 15:25). The church has fluctuated between two extremes historically. A flat condemnation of all dancing has been prevalent. To answer this misconception, we must hear what the Psalmist has to say when he commands us to praise God in the dance (Psalm 149:3, 150:4). The other error probably began in the 2nd or 3rd century, possibly with the Montanists. The gifts and ministries of the Spirit were given such high priority that their operation superceded church authority or even individual responsibility. As a result the Spirit 'came upon' them in a manner almost independent from the vessel. The only valid inspiration to dance would be when the 'spirit' possessed them in ecstatic frenzy. Naturally, there was no place for practice, discipline, or forethought because then 'flesh' would be involved. This

practice was immediately questioned but has survived to this day among many pentecostal and holiness groups. In answer to this, the New Testament describes us as co-laborers with God. We've received gifts and talents that we must now invest into our daily walk, exploring how we might use these abilities for His glory. (Matt. 25: 14-30). This means as individuals and communities, we are vitally and personally involved in the creative process with our Lord. Truthfully, our talents must go to the cross to be of use to God, and the risk of mixture or misrepresentation is always before us as we try to follow Christ, yet with every investment there is a risk factor and Jesus made it clear that we must venture away from the shore if we are to swim.

Developing Confidence Before God

"Where is it that we must begin to implement this vision, when all around us, Satan has twisted and distorted the true prupose of dance? People dance for selfish recognition in the world; our motives should be to worship and honor the King. The place to begin is in our closet, before God. He alone will see such an offering, and the danger of performing for attention is eliminated. Also, we won't feel inhibited by what 'other people think'. An initial suggestion to explore this means of worship would be to put on some music that glorifies God and just let yourself express feelings worthy of His name. Leap, lift your hands, bow, twirl and release your joy and thanks to Him. Another possibility would be to tape a reading of scripture and then try to interpret it through movement. It cannot be denied that our gestures enhance and describe more fully what we are trying to communicate. Dance is developing a vocabulary of these bodily expressions. Just as in a language many words and phrases are unacceptable before God, so it is in dance. The ultimate goal is to magnify God through our movements in worship.

"Confidence and sensitivity will thus be developed in our worship times, laying a foundation for the possibility of dancing before God in the congregation. David is our high example here. David's dance before the ark of the covenant is almost universally known. We note that David is foremost a worshipper. On starry nights from his youth, David danced before the Lord in delight with only his flock as an audience. Surely when he killed the lion and bear, he twirled and leaped for joy to the God who granted the victory. Now we see the king dancing before the ark on its journey to the Holy City. From experience he rises to the occasion to display his gratitude and devotion to the one he loves. This is a spontaneous offering inspired by the Holy Spirit for the moment. Notice, however, the marked increase in responsibility here. David is not only dancing before the Lord but he is before the assembly also. His offering is open to the scrutiny and criticism of others. There will always be those who, like Michal, do not have eyes to see the Spirit of the Lord. Many are critical of the liberty we receive as Christ sets us free. In Jesus' day, Mary anointed the Lord with oil and washed His feet with tears, and yet many who observed such outward display of devotion voiced criticism to hide their own inability to humble themselves. Still, we must remember that correction and critique are essential.

"I must give a few words of caution here that I believe are valid. Individual churches may be at a very different stage of development. We should be sure in our zeal to follow God that we are really representing Him in a given area. Moses knew he was to be Israel's deliverer, but he had neither the expertise or the timing to implement God's direction fresh out of Egypt. To be sure our leading is from God we should go to our pastors for confirmation. Has the congregation been prepared or taught to receive dance?

Is our timing right? Would dance be appropriate in the context of a particular meeting? We have the freedom to refrain from dancing rather than deliberately stumble the brethren.

Ministering To God's People

"As our portrait of dance appears, we cannot overlook the direction in which we are heading. It is evident that we are viewing dance as an aspect of our priesthood to God. Paul encourages us to present our bodies as living sacrifices. (Rom 12:1) Our Lord needs a body to express His joy and beauty in the same way He uses us to to preach the gospel or feed the poor.

"Our emphasis to this point has been our vertical relationship to God in worship. Another aspect of dance that is coming into focus is direct ministry to the church. We are sensing the extra weight of responsibility that is involved in leading others through our example in worship. We believe God is calling certain individuals to explore the potential of dance as a valid, edifying ministry to His people. Though dance may not hold the same priority as, say, the preaching of God's word, we must not overlook that it is a powerful communicative force. Far too long the Christian Church has cowered from touching the arts, such as drama, graphics, or music. Meanwhile, as the church has avoided this issue, the enemy has used the arts consistently to subvert the world to his views.

"We must clearly delineate that not everyone who has a desire to dance is ordained to this ministry by God. If dance is to be edifying to His people, there must be more than a casual curiosity. To minister in dance, one must pay the price to qualify. One may even be gifted, but to offer genuine life he must sweat, sacrifice, and work ina disciplined manner. Many leaders are discovering the importance of commissioning artists who are recognized to have an auth-

entic gift or calling. Obviously, some serious efforts will be necessary in order that others can observe and confirm one's call. If someone is earnest about dance as ministry to God and the brethren, then they will be concerned about excellence. The Lord overlooks our wobbly first efforts but will surely encourage us to develop our skill and understanding. (I Chron 15:22, Ps 33:3)

Necessity of Training

"Now we have to be very practical. A dancer must be in good shape as his body is the instrument. Exercise and training are in order. Like any discipline there are certain rules that must be obeyed before any high degree of creativity will be possible. A musician can play by instinct only so long before he realizes his severe limitations, and then by applying himself to the laws of music, he will increase the full range of his capacities. We should all build on the knowledge of others who have gone before us. So it is with dance. The basic fundamentals have been laid out so that we can with the body accomplish our purposes. If we cannot fit consistent training into our priorities, we are day-dreaming.

"Instruction will be essential. I believe in the apprentice system. No one starting with himself, and ending with himself becomes an expert (myoptic, maybe!)

"Unfortunately, at this stage of pioneering there are very few in the body of Christ who qualify as instructors. If you have someone in your locality, praise be to God! If not, we would suggest taking a dance class in your community. Although not every instructor or class will be good, we can learn much from even a secular dance class, if we are mature enough to glean from it. We cannot accept a non-Christian world-view or philosphy, but we can take the 'jewels from Egypt'. The jewels that the Israelites 'borrowed' from Egypt

were eventually fashioned into the ark of the covenant (which incidentally was a beautiful work of art). In our area, my wife and I have been fortunate to find instructors whose primary aim has been training dancers in pure technique. Most importantly, your instructor should be a dancer! Humorous as it may sound, some are not, but are just glorified P.E. instructors. The teacher should be authoritative and assuring, and willing to give personal correction.

"There are various classes or styles of dancing from which you might choose. Beginning classes will emphasize basic techniques that will be beneficial in the long run. Certain styles are most conducive to particular purposes. Folk dancing, for instance, will be good for involving the community in dance. Its emphasis is not on technique but rather group participation. We tried this at a picnic in the park, and it was great fun for young and old. Another truly fulfilling experience was an evening of square dancing. Although strictly an American dance form, and belittled in the eyes of some, it provided the congregation with a feeling of the rich potential dance offers. Ballet and modern dance will, on the other hand, be more concerned with artistic form and the conveying of a message. Our own group of dancers began with some simple interpretive movements to songs with very graphic lyrics. At 'Love-Inn', a New York ministry under the direction of Scott Ross, the dance company has leaned more towards jazz - dance. This compliments their dramatic productions as an evangelistic tool directed toward the college community. If your direction is not that clear, any one of these beginning classes would give you a good basic foundation and then any needed adjustments can be made later.

"Do not be discouraged! It may seem slow going at first if you've had no previous experience. Patient endurance has always been God's means of

producing worth and quality. Don't be pressured into performing prematurely. Our dancers waited for a year and a half before they offered a presentation to the body.

"The goal is to bring your body and spirit to a place of readiness where God can get hold of you as He needs you.

"One of our first opportunities came when some leaders commissioned us to put together a very specific interpretive movement for a wedding. We were told basically what they had in mind and were to experiment with in those limitations. There was security in knowing our boundaries and yet it still provided much room for creativity. We can look back now and see how simple and unskilled we were at that time, but because we were submitted, the Lord anointed and blessed our efforts. We gained much encouragement as the congregation responded with delight. The whole incident could not have come to pass if we had not been prepared, obedient, and open to that specific project. We need to learn not to 'despise the day of small things' (Zech 4:10). In context, Zechariah is charging his people to complete the temple of the Lord, and the people are discouraged because only the foundation is laid. Zechariah says to rejoice and do not belittle the work accomplished so far.

"Here is a check list that may be helpful as you prepare yourself to minister to the assembly:

1. Are you dancing beyond your technical experience or ability?
2. Is your offering relevant to the theme in your fellowship?
3. Does it edify, encourage, or comfort?
4. Are your motives to give life (vs. Performance)?
5. Is this a corporate project or 'my baby'? In other words, are you possessive and defensive toward others' ideas, correction, counsel, help, etc?

6. Are you willing to be accountable for what you are saying in dance?

"There is no room here for what may be called the 'artistic temperament' or the 'fragile psyche of the artist'. In God's kingdom, defining aesthetic values and standards is necessary. The artist's work is subject to critique and value judgement and his offering must be judged for its inspiration. (I Cor 14:29)

The Role of The Dance Community

"Finally, I just want to pass on my personal encouragement toward your endeavors in dance. Even if you never dance, hopefully this article has stimulated your receptivity. We've seen dance can draw the community together and be a vehicle to express its life. It may be a tool of proclamation for God's Kingdom. You may worship, celebrate, and praise through dance. It may convey a moral or speak prophetically. It operates effectively in conjunction with music, drama, or readings. Most importantly, it provides both individual and corporate release to our lovely, precious King,who is worthy or our full joy and worship, and allows Him to express certain aspects of His glory in our midst. 'For in Him dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' Herein lies the mystery of our need for dance: Christ has brought redemption even to our bodies. (Romans 8:11)

"As the times in which we live become increasingly unstable and insecure, we may question the importance of the creative arts. As we examine both God's word and history, we see that some of the greatest periods of expression and restoration either coincide with or emerge from times of pressure and tribulation. As our age moves toward further dehumanization and a mechanistic model, the church must counter with a renewed emphasis on expressive arts to explore the full range of redemptive human qualities.

Our priorities will surely need adjustment along the way, but I am hopeful that the vision of restoration of the whole man in the context of the King's community has taken root in our hearts. May we dance in an atmosphere charged with His presence and holiness in preparation for the marriage celebration that seals eternity with our King and Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ."

(Note from the author: "the article was written in '79 for Epistle Magazine, mainly as an introduction to Dance in the Church. We've all come a long way since then, but as I reread this, it was a good refresher of our foundation. I hope it is a blessing to you. In Jesus, Regina")

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ENDOWMENTS *** ENDOWMENTS *** ENDOWMENTS

ATTENTION SDG MEMBERS: Do write Doug Adams, 1798 Scenic Avenue, Berkeley, Ca., 94709or The Connie Fisher Endowment for Sacred Dance, The Iliff School of Theology,2201So. University Blvd., Denver, Colorado 80210 to cntribte to their respective Endowments

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** ** ** Recommended Reading ** ** ** **

1.

"Your Move: A New Approach to the Study of Movement and Dance" by Ann Hutchinson Guest, Gordon and Breach Science Publishers, Inc., One Park Avenue, New York, New York 10016,$24.95.

"In Your Move Ann Hutchinson Guest establishes a fresh and original framework for looking at dance. Examining the basic elements of dance - what the author calls the alphabet of movement - she uses illustrations of movement technique and notation symbols to provide a new way to see, to teach and to choreograph dance.

"Guest provides, for the first time, a list of primary actions upon which all physical activity is based, focusing on both the functional and expressive sides of movement. She draws upon her broad experience in ballet, modern and ethnic dance to reinterpret movement and to shed new light on the role of movement in dance. Your Move is an important book not only for dancers but for instructors in sport and physical therapy as well.

"Each copy of Your Move comes with a complete set of Exercise Sheets. A Teacher's Guide has also been designed for Your Move, and an optional cassette tape, with music written and recorded especially for use with the book is also available..."

2.

Doug Adams, editor,"Dancing Through Ordinary Time", $3.00 plus $1 postage from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 787682224.

"Here we have a number of different approaches to dancing in worship for the period from Pente-

cost through Thanksgiving in what the churches call ordinary time. This new Modern Liturgy issue has the following articles: Doug Adams' "Wisdom in Liturgical Dancing Through Ordinary Time," Cindy Winton-Henry's "Improvisations: Making Way for an Extraordinary Ordinary Time," Margaret Taylor's "Dancing Over the Generation Gaps," Shirley Stager's "A September Time to Dance," Martha Ann Kirk's "Mexican Folk Dances for Ordinary Time," Carolyn Krantz"s "Dancing with the Saints." (Review by Doug Adams)

3.

Doug Adams, CHANGING BIBLICAL IMAGERY AND ARTISTIC IDENTITY IN TWENTIETH CENTURY LITURGICAL DANCE, $3.00 plus $1 postage from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 787682224.

By studying the changing patters of Biblical texts and images chosen and developed in liturgical dance and other dance rituals, we glimpse changing artistic identity and theological concerns from the 1920s through the 1970s. This publication shows the shifting configurations of Biblical images in liturgical dance through those six decades and discusses the connections between these configurations and the shifting artistic identity and theological concerns. A strong prophetic spirit is noted in the images chosen by choreographers through the past six decades.

In the early 1920s, dances featured themes from Genesis (creation, deluge, and Joseph) and from the New Testament (Salome). In such choreographies, one may detect an internationalism but also a critique of material prosperity and cosmopolitan disposition. In the early 1930s, other themes such as Job and The Prodigal Son and the Wise and Foolish Virgins appear in the dance: themes befitting a period of depression (with the latter theme especially prominent in the last five years of the 1930s foreshadowing the outbreak of world

war.) Also in the late 1930s appears the theme of David Triumphant stressing the triumph over Goliath. Such works were a mocking of Goliath's military might and preparedness that Germany increasingly exemplified while other European countries appeared more like the poorly equipped David.

By the 1950's, choreographies stress the role of powerful women (Judith, Deborah, Esther, and Ruth); and those themes continue into the early 1969s as major emphases. By the late 1960s, - the theme of Cain and Abel has emerged; and in the 1970s, the major Old Testament theme is Abraham and Isaac while the major New Testament theme is crucifixion. The emerging role of women in political and cultural life is foreshadowed in the dances of the 1950s; and the internal struggles between generations and over issues of violence are seen in the dances of the late 1960s and through the 1970s. The choice of themes and the choreographic treatments identify the artists with the prophetic spirit. (Review by Doug Adams)

4.

Michael Moynahan, editor, JESUS' MIRACLES THROUGH THE ARTS IN WORSHIP, $3.00 plus $1 postage from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 787682224. This new issue of Modern Liturgy shows how to bring the miracles of Jesus to life in worship using dance, drama/mime, and visual art often to reveal the humor of the miracles where Jesus is more of a clown than a magician. Articles included are: Chris Uhlmann and Cathy Lee's "The Experience of Healing Through Dance," Doug Adams' "Bringing to Life the Humor of Jesus' Miracles," Michael Moynahan's "Dramatizing The Miracles of Jesus," Kay Irwin's "Ancient Art and the Miracles of Jesus," and William Herzog's "Miracle Stories: Parables of Wholeness."

5.

Michael Moynahan, ONCE UPON A PARABLE (Story Dramatizations/Mimes of Jesus' Parables of the Kingdom of God.) 176 pages,1984. $8.95 plus $1 for postage from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 224, Austin, Texas 787682224.

The Table of Content of The Story Dramatizations:

1. Children and the Kingdom (Luke 18:15-16)
2. The Wise and Foolish Pilgrims (Ten Bridesmaids, Matthew 25:1-13)
3. The People Who Dwelt in Darkness (The Talents, Matthew 25:14-30)
4. Something Missing (Lost Coin, Luke 15:8-10)
5. Do Drop In (The Good Samaritan, Luke 10:25-37)
6. The Curious Clue (Mustard Seed, Mark 4:30-34)
7. Under The Big Top (Vineyard Workers, Matthew 20:1-15)
8. A Waste of Time (Unmerciful Servant, Matthew 18:21-35)
9. What If You Gave A circus and Nobody Came (The Wedding Banquet, Matthew 22:1-14)
10. Lost and Found (Lost Sheep, Matthew 18:10-14)
11. The Road to Bethany (Martha & Mary, Luke 10: 38-42)
12. Dream a Little Dream (Dives and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31) (Review by Doug Adams)

6.

Diane Apostolos-Cappadona, editor, ART, CREATIVITY, AND THE SACRED: An Anthology In Religion and Art, 1984, $15.95 plus $1 postage from The Sharing Company, P.O. Box 2224, Austin, Texas 787682224. In this 336 page book, the top people from around the country relating religion and visual arts contribute chapters. The extensive bibliography as well as the range of chapters help the reader see many ways for religion and the arts to inform each other to the enhancement of both. Dancers will find many ways to enrich their own relating of religion and dance as they read how visual

arts and religion shape each other. This is a major publishing event.

Contents: Part I - Artists: The Spiritual Dimensions: 1. Concerning the Spiritual in Art by Wassily Kandinsky
2. Craft: Making and Being by Cecilia Davis Cunningham
3. The Art of Deception by Karen Laub-Novak
4. Reflections on Art and the Spirit: A Conversation by Stephen Destaebler and Diane Apostolos-Cappadona

Part II - Art Historians: The Religious in Art
5. The SevenFunctions of the Hands of Christ: Aspects of Leonardo's Last Supper by Leo Steinberg
6. In Alia Effgie: Carvaggio's London Supper at Emmaus by Charles Scribner III
7. The Nationalist Garden and the Holy Book by Barbara Novak
8. The Religious Impulse in American Art by Joshua C. Taylor
9. George Segal's Abraham and Isaac: Some Iconographic Reflections by Jane Dillenberger

Part III - Historians of Religion: Art in Religious Traditions
10. The Origin and Use of Images in India by Amanda K. Coomaraswamy
11. Foundations for a Religio-Aesthetic Tradition in Japan by Richard B. Pilgrim
12. Judaism and Art by David Altshuler and Linda Altshuler
13. An Islamic Perspective on Symbolism in the Arts: New Thoughts on Figural Representation by Lois IbsenAl Faruqi
14. The Sacred and the Modern Artist by Mircea Eliade

Part IV - Philosophers and Theologians: Reflections on Art
15. Can Art Fill the Vacuum? by Langdon B. Gilkey

16. ARtists and Church Commissions: Rubin's The Church at Assy Revisited by John Dillenberger
17. The Aesthetic Dimension in Theology by Thomas Franklin O'Meara
18. Art and Ultimate Reality by Paul Tillich
19. The Religious Classic and the Classic of Art by David Tracy
20. Question: When Is Religion Art? Answer: When It Is a Jar. by T. R. Martland
21. Art, Religion, and the Elite: Reflections on a Passage from Andre Malroux by Nicholas Wolterstorpp
22. Painting As Theological Thought: The Issues in Tuscan Theology by John W. Dixon, Jr.
23. Theological Reflections on an Image of Woman: Picasso's Girl before a Mirror by Melinda Wortz
24. Berdyaev and Rothko: Transformative Visions by Roger Wedell
25. Theological Expressions through Visual Art Forms by Doug Adams

Part VI - Bibliographies
Sources for the Study of Christianity and the Arts by John W. Cook
Special Topic Bibliographies
Contributors (Review by Doug Adams)

7

Gene Edward Veith, The Gift of Art: The Place of the Arts in Scripture, Inter-Varsity Press, Downers Grove, Il., 1983, 130 pages, $4.95.

"This book is an exploration of what the Bible says and what it implies about art. It touches on theology, aesthetics, history and criticism, but it does not pretend to offer a comprehensive or definitive treatment of any of them. It is primarily an inspirational book, designed to offer guidance, suggestions and, I hope, some stimulation for Christians involved in the arts."

The author in the above quote from the preface to his book, The Gift of Art, sums it up quite

well. This is the best book to come out that looks specifically at what the scriptures say about art, and not merely to use them to support a thesis. Dr. Veith begins with a look at "Icons, Iconoclasts,and Philistines" and how the Bible support each view in various places and points in time. Using Bezalel, the temple, the brazen serpent, and other examples, we are shown this "good" gift of art. With a liberating clarity, the underlying principles of art as God intended it are brought to light. Though Dr. Veith does not talk much about dance per se, it is an invaluable book for the principles it deals with and for bridging the gap with those who just can't quite understand why you desire to worship with the creative gifts He has give you. (Reviewed by Philip Griffith II, P.O. Box 31162 Jackson, Ms 39206)

8.

Dancing with Creation by Martha Ann Kirk, $5.95 plus 50¢ per book for handling and postage Rush House, 6221 Cypress #2, El Cerrito, California 94530.

The background of religious dance, ideas and principles for use in prayer, a captivating presentation of a dozen dances, and candid photographs are given. These dances from the Mexican and native American traditions can enrich the worship and religious education of the whole Christian community. Chapter titles include: Indigenous Dances as Prophetic Voices, The Background of Mexican and Native American Religious Dance, Dancing to Heal Creation: Native American Spirituality and Ecology, Dancing to Laugh: Joy and Humor in Ritual, Dance in Worship, and Twelve Dances for Worship and Education.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

From Philip Griffith II, P.O. Box 31162, Jackson, Ms. 39206:

"Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! My name is Philip Griffith and I am a dancer with the Ballet Mississippi here in Jackson.

"As a Christian who is also a professional dancer, I have learned the importence of being able to have fellowship with other Christians in my field. This is my reason for writing you this letter, and for sending you the enclosed questionnaire, the information from which will be compiled into a Directory of Christian Dancers.

"When I was a student in New York, I met Gregory Mitchell. Greg had started the New York Fellowship of Christian Dancers and was gathering information to put a Directory of Christian Dancers together. The New York Fellowship of Christian Dancers became part of the New York Arts Group (NYAG) in the spring of '78. Greg had joined the Feld Ballet and due to the demands of work, was not able to complete the Directory.

"The interest in the Directory generated by Greg's first survey, the continuing interest of people I have come in contact with, and the growing number of Christian art groups have led me to believe it is important to get the Directory out. After speaking with Greg, we both felt the Directory would be a valuable tool/resource to promote communication and fellowship.

"The enclosed questionnaire is designed to bring all the names, addresses, working status,etc. up to date. If you have a current resume and photo, literature, or names and addresses of Christian dancers you know, please send them in along with the questionnaire. I would like to get acquainted with as many of you as I can so I can begin to pray more intelligently for my brothers and sisters in the dance world, and for the needs in

your various companies, fellowships, groups, etc.

"The Directory will be mailed out sometime in January. ....Feel free to write or call me with any thoughts, suggestions, or comments. Thanks for listening and keep in touch! God bless!"

(Ed. Note: Since this came too late for the deadline, still write to him if you have interest in his project.)

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From Constance Durant, 3 Chester Street, Schenectady, New York 12304:

"I would like the following information included in the Editorial Section: In February, 1984 I will be performing a one woman show entitled 'Women and Prayer: an Experience of Black Women and Dance,' to be held at the St. Joseph's Provincial House in Latham, New York. This is the Provincial of the Sisters of St. Joseph Carondelet. The program will include some of my own work and is to be a tribute to Black History month. If anyone else reading this Journal is interested in having me do ethnic prayer dance experiences related to women, you may contact me in writing at the following address: 3-Chester Street, Schenectady, New York 12304."

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REMEMBER "STRETCHING SACRED DANCE - FESTIVAL '84"

at PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION, BERKELEY, CA. 94709

SEE CENTERFOLD

OH - O - O - O Break away from the small groups and repeat the wailing sway of the torso and arms.
SOMETIMES IT CAUSES ME TO TREMBLE, TREMBLE, TREMBLE, Repeat the variations during the 3 "trembles."
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THE SUN REFUSED TO SHINE? Don't return to the small groups, but look across at other persons, then search the darkened sky again.

(3) WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY LEFT HIM THERE TO DIE? Everyone starts to leave the crucifixion area. Most of them leave close to each other, some pause to look back, a few remain.
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY LEFT HIM THERE TO DIE? Continue a variety of ways of leaving - turning back, moving away with others, etc.
OH - O - O - SOMETIMES IT CAUSES ME TO TREMBLE, TREMBLE, Everyone turns back toward the Cross for a last time to express the indelible experience of witnessing the agony of Christ on the Cross. The same pattern of movement is repeated: the wail and the graduated trembling.
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY LEFT HIM THERE TO DIE? The clusters continue leaving the scene. If one or two persons are still remaining near the Cross, a few from the clusters may go back to them and compassionately help them to leave.

If more time is needed for all the participants to return to the back pews or to reach the back of the room, everyone can hum a final stanza.

This sequence of suffering experienced vicariously can be presented by young and old with one rehearsal. If there are one or two in each cluster that have rehearsed the sequences previously, they can be like leaven in their cluster, giving assurance to the others. The experience is deepened if the area is in semi-darkness.
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cross) may be projected on the wall as a focal area.
(1) WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD
Those in each group gather closely to each other. They move slowly and tensely toward the Cross. Each person acts spontaneously and genuinely - some holding back, some drawn forward, some turning to cling to another. All are singing the spiritual as they move.
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD? Each one continues in the gradual, tense approach toward the cross. Shoulders are hunched, fingers tightly clenched or extended stiffly, eyes fixed on the cross or shielded by hands as if too horrible to view.
OH - O - O - O This wail can be expressed by a swing of the torso, either upward or downward or in a full circle. The wailing swing is slow and tense.
SOMETIMES IT CAUSES ME Take a stance of felt agony with attention riveted on the Cross.
TO TREMBLE, TREMBLE, TREMBLE, Accentuate this stance with 3 staccato gestures, either going higher, higher, higher or lower, lower, lower. Some should reach upward and some should contract downward.
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD? Similar movement to the first line, attention on the cross or turning to others in one's cluster.

(2) WERE YOU THERE Everyone turns to 2 or 3 persons close by, reaches out with right hand to grasp the others' right hands or arms. They now are in small groups of 3 or 4 persons clustered with a sense of fear because the sky had darkened.
WHEN THE SUN REFUSED TO SHINE Look up searching for the sun which has disappeared. Lift the left elbow and hand, palm up, fingers extended and then spread upward and outward. The eyes follow the moving hand, looking beyond and searching for the sun. The right hands remain joined with the others' in the small grups.
WERE YOU THERE WHEN THE SUN REFUSED TO SHINE Repeat the same pattern of turning into the center of the small group, then the searching for the sun.

COLORADO:

"Dance God a Simple Song with Rosemary Molak" was presented by the Rocky Mountain Sacred Dance Guild onOctober 29, 1983 in the Great Hall, Iliff School of Theology, Denver.

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PREVIEW: ALL TOGETHER IN DRAMATIC MOVEMENT (for people 9 to 90) by Margaret Taylor Doane
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This summer and fall I have been writing a book to be entitled: All Together in Dramatic Movement (for people 9 to 90). It includes music and suggested choreography for at least 20 hymns and songs for use in worship and in informal gatherings. The numbers are divided into sections on Standing, Processing, Circling, Moving in Cluster Groups, and Responding to a Creative (dance) group as in a Litany. It is beamed to participation by ordinary people, but dancers can be tremendous help as "enablers". I hope to have it finished in January....

(Ed: Note: As an Example, Margaret is sharing the following:)

WERE YOU THERE WHEN THEY CRUCIFIED MY LORD?
by Taylor

During the hours of the Crucifixion people huddled together in small groups, sometimes just watching, sometimes talking together, sometimes moving from one cluster to another. Some children were there with the adults and they too sensed the horror and the suffering.

The participants in this dramatic action may be divided into two or three cluster groups about 20 feet from a center where there is a large cross or an imagined cross. Or, if this is dramatized in a darkened area, a cross (or the shadow of a

"What is Aerobic Dance? The word 'aerobic' used as an adjective refers to an 'organizm or process depending on free oxygen or air'. The term is often used to describe the process of molecular interchange which occurs when an oxygen molecule attaches itself to a haemoglobin molecule in the bloodstream and is carried through the bloodstream to the body tissues. As an adjective then, it does not give us much of a clue as to what this kind of dance is different to any other except perhaps in terms of its emphasis. And dance? Dance could be defined as 'a series of rhythmical steps and movements, usually in time to music' - a broad but useful definition, particularly in this context. (One of the best thoughts I have heard on the question 'What is dance?' was 'movement with heightened sensitivity' -highly applicable to Christian dance).

"....6) GLORIFYING TO GOD - Can you worship God in and through your activity or are you tied in to concentrating on the effort involved? Do you feel embarrassed doing a particular movement? Is it necessarily competitive?

"....Thank God for your body; thank Him for making you unique, just the way you are. Pray and ask God for a right attitude to your body, its strengths and weaknesses. Pray too for guidance as to how to become more flexible in the hands of the Potter without getting 'ripped off' by world attitudes to physical fitness and body worship."

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cHaPtEr nEwS cHaPtEr

OREGON:

"Moving Statements for Celebration" was held October 21, 1983 with Israeli Folk Dances. It was a weekend of sacred dance activities.

"GOD'S TEMPLE

"'Surely you know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit lives in you! So if any one destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you yourselves are His temple.' - 1 Corinthians 3:16-17-

"This is the word of Our Lord. The Christian is called to an attitude of reverence towards his/her own being(human-being), for it is here that the Spirit of God has chosen to dwell. The temple incorporates body, mind and soul, and the three are inseparable in the functioning of the Christian (dancer). Nevertheless, our society today is intent on divorcing these areas of functioning, particularly emphasising the physical body in its stressing the value of exercise programmes. These exercise programmes (and aerobic dance is one example) claim a range of benefits including increase in the level of fitness, better physical shape and muscle tone, and one, even described as being 'excellent for people with psychological problems, including depression'.

"WHAT IS AEROBIC DANCE?

"Aerobic dance has gained a high degree of popularity in Australia in a very short period of time. We could call it the latest instant fitness 'craze' or 'fad'; only time will tell whether aerobic dance will prove enduring beyond these titles. However, not only has society seized upon aerobic dance as a way of fitness, so too have Christians replaced the secular music with Christian music and adopted the fad seemingly without question as to its meaning or value. Christians are called to be in the world, yet not of it - help us Lord to have the discernment given by your Holy Spirit to know how we can bless you and not grieve you in the use of our bodies which you have so perfectly made.

in touch with our membership on a more efficient and timely manner..." It would seem they picked up the idea from the SDG!

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The Fall Dance Concert November 11 and 12, 1983 at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, Il sponsored by the Student Center and SPC featured "The Bible as Dance" choreography by Oma Frankl. Program Notes included the following: "The Bible served as an inspiration to numerous artists and was the choreographer's self induction for this concert. Being born in Israel, and raised along with the Bible stories on passion and crime, victory and defeat, love and lust, cruelty and kindness, the choreographer had her own ideas and fantacies of the Biblical stories.

"The Bible was used as a tool to revive those young adolescent fantacies in terms abstract, yet concrete enough to accommodate dance in which the sensual and spiritual meet."

Titles of the dances included: In the Beginning, David and Goliath, Miriam, Samson and Delilah, and From Slavery to Freedom

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From LEAPING, Newsletter of Christian Dance Fellowship of Australia, PO Box 373 Milson's Point NSW (02) 929 4988 Telex 27987: (The Cover shows a cross with a dancer designed as part of it with nature - celebrating their fifth year!)

The Christian Dance Drama Clowing Mime Conference was held January 5-11, 1984 at Ballarat, Victoria. It is held every two years.

Stewardship of the Temple - AEROBIC DANCE and the Christian by Gillian Harvey

creation just begun;
we search a segment of the shore
to test our gift
against the vast unknown.

Ring in the new! Alert us to familiar havens
that conspire to make us think we've come
this way before. We set upon an unworn course;
the more we learn, the more we build,
the more we find that's new.

Ring out expectantly! Move us to recognize
the newness in the old man,
the ancient in the child.

Our very selves conceal a world of
unrevealed truth, uncalibrated measure.
Where is there greater victory than
to learn to tie a shoe and walk
when the odds are hard against it!"

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Janet Skidmore: Saturday December 10, 1983 from one to three had a dance workshop "Dancing Christmas Carols."

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For further information on Video Resources, write: ARC Video Dance, 178 Bennet Avenue, New York OR Lisa Orlando, Choreo/Camera, 111 Sullivan Street, #3AF, New York, NY 10012 OR Televideo Production Services, San Francisco and Oakland, California OR MICA, 400First Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55401.

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Ed. Note: Your Editor notices that the American Dance Guild now has an UPDATE "Update is our mini-version of the Newsletter. To be printed bi-monthly, this communication tool alternates with the Newsletter, while allowing us to keep

"BIT" REVIEWS

From the Miami Presbytery Summer Music Experience '84, C.W. Locke, 15 N. Chillicothe St., South Charleston, OH 45368.

The Arts in Worship, Liturgy and Music on July 15-20, 1984, Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio is designed to broaden and strengthen the skills of Clergy, Church Musicians, Educators, Worship Planners and worshippers of all denominations. Noralie McCoy, a SDG member, is on the committee. For Adults will have a course entitled "A Dancing People" with Sister Adelaide Ortegel and the Youth will have a class entitled "Liturgical Dance" with Noralie McCoy and Sister Ortegel. (Ed. Note: For Information write the above address.)

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From the Maryknoll, January 1984:

Ring in the new! by Patricia Jacobsen, M.M.

"An unused year is given us,
a stretch of history to make;
a pliant passage now awaits
our individual print upon the universe.
And the voices that shout to us
across the centuries past
are new today
because the day is new.

The seed is in our hand
to relinquish for the planting
and perhaps to hold again
--in part--at harvest.
The time is unexplored,

separate soul and body, male and female, reason and motion, whites and blacks, clergy and laity, sacred and profane, and put the first above the second, get confused through the use of liturgical dance.

"The anonymous article that appeared in the magazine Notitiae, in 1975 and is now being emphasized by some at the Vatican is historically inaccurate, theologically unsound and uninformed in its description of the experience of dance. What the notice does indicate is how much liturgical dance is threatening the power structure and dualism of the church today.

"In Christian tradition there are strong precedents for using dance in eucharistic worship today. In Spain the Los Seis dance continues to be done in the cathedral of Seville; the dance began in the Mozarabic liturgy which was encouraged by the Council of Toledo in the seventh century. There are hundreds of instances of appropiate and meaningful religious dance used in Christian worship that are cited in historical documents.

"Even during the Middle Ages when an impoverished theology of the eucharist focused on merely looking at the consecrated bread rather than taking and eating as Christ commanded, dance was done to celebrate the eucharistic body of Christ. Processions such as those on the feast of Corpus Christi included dance before the blessed sacrament. As dance has been used in all centuries to praise Christ through the beauty of his body, the church, so in our century dance should be used to enflesh eucharistic theologies with the dynamic action of Christ among us.

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disciples. Both sources give examples of Jesus basic command that his followers are not to lord it over others, to use power to dominate. Dancing in a circle with others and washing their feet disrupts systems of power over others.

"Liturgical practice with only clergy actively participating in ways other than words has implied that the clergy has a monopoly on understanding and sharing the gospel. Liturgical dance, mime and drama make visible and encourage the role of the people of God as those who embody the word and evangelize the world.

"In the last 15 years, at ordinations, Holy Week services andat other special liturgies, alone or with groups, I have proclaimed the gospel in dance, mime and drama. Marginal groups such as Mexican Americans, blacks and Native Americans have celebrated in their unique idioms of movement and drama. Repeatedly persons who have experienced the arts in worship have said they were able to hear the gospel in the depths of their hearts in new ways. The arts often open people to effective conversion while words address intellectual conversion.

"This has serious implications, and some of the hierarchy are beginning to realize it. If a woman using her whole body can proclaim the gospel with a beauty and power a male cleric using only words does not always have, the power structure of the church begins to be subverted. If Marginal groups proclaim the reign of God while the rich and the majority miss it, the power structure in society begins to be suberted.

"For centuries both Judaism and Christianity prohibited women from the sanctuary and full participation in ritual because women's bodies are associated with ritual impurity. The arts of marginal peoples have been both ignored and belittled, and this has been a way of denying the dignity of these persons. The systems which

"The notices discouraging liturgical dance coming from some Vatican administrators are the cries of sick persons pinpointing where the church needs healing: in its attitudes toward the body, in its dualism and in its power structure. When persons or institutions separate and deny parts of themselves, the brokenness and confusion they feel is often projected onto other people and things.

"In Western Christianity, nature, the body, the feminine, the intuitive and the emotional have been suppressed. Throughout the history of Christianity, suspicion and evil have been projected onto these. Liturgical dance begins to integrate persons and heal dualisms.

"The relationship between dance and the church power structure may shed some light on the current Vatican fear of dance. The extreme separation of clergy and laity began in the late fourth century. Clerical dress was used to set some apart. Instead of the eucharist being shared on an altar table in the midst of the people of God, the action began to be done above and away from the people for the clergy. The people began to be passive recipients rather than active participants in the church.

"While in the early church the people of God with the clergy among them had done liturgical dances together, especially dances in circles which show mutuality and unity, priests began to dance only with priests and deacons with deacons. Dancing together had affirmed the common priesthood and the one body of Christ.

"In the Acts of John, a document written about 120 A.D., there is a story about the Last Supper which probably reflects the liturgical practice of the period. Those at the supper dance in a circle and Jesus sings, 'Whoever does not dance, does not know the way of life.' John's gospel describes Jesus washing the feet of the

that the Archbishop of our diocese had sent letters to all clergy and religious passing on the message from Cardinal Casoria that basically dance is forbidden within the liturgy. Ten years of involvement in religious dance has convinced me of the great value of dance within the liturgy and within the life of the christian community. No one of any level of the church leadership can convince me otherwise.

"With the support of our liturgy committee, the sacred dancers of our Catholic parish continue to create, dance and contribute our special gifts. We disagree with the statements of the document from the Vatican regarding liturgical dance and about the history of dance within the western traditions. There has been a thread of religious dance and we are continuing to nurture that perspective on dance. True, much dance is entertainment and performance...but that does not mean that westerners do not hunger for a a meaningful dance expression as part of their daily lives - festivities, worship...and we will continue to be part of this creative prayerful form of worshipping God."

Ann Schneider
Catholic
2427 NE 17th
Portland, Oregon

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From the National Catholic Reporter, October 28 1983, Page 10:

"Dancing Away Power Structures" by Martha Ann Kirk, CCVI

"A doctor can touch healthy parts of a person's body and get no response. But when a wound or broken bone is touched, the patient will cry out. The Intensity of the patient's cry indicates how much healing is needed in that specific area.

unsuitable. Can we dance anyway in conscious disregard? Can we continue to dance as part of the mass but hope, like children whose parents have gone out for the evening, that we don't get 'caught' by the bishop. Here in Portland we are already limited by directive of the Archbishop in what we can now do. It is an issue which must be addressed squarely. In my parish of St. Andrew, the Sacred Dancers sent a letter to Archbishop Power a few months ago inviting him to enter into a dialogue with us about Sacred Dance. As yet there has been no response.

"Meanwhile, our task as Catholic Sacred Dancers, as I see it, is to pray for wisdom for both advocates and opponents of Sacred Dance and to continue in our efforts to encourage discussions about Sacred Dance amongst our parishes and between dance advocates and the Catholic hierarchy."

Meg Roland, 5209 NE 35th Ave.
Portland, Oregon 97211
(503) 282-0705
Member of St. Andrew Sacred Dancers,
Portland, Oregon

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"DANCE WHEREEVER YOU MAY BE -- even Portland, OREGON"

"Almost 10 years ago, I discovered the book, 'Religious Dances' by Backman which opened my eyes to the history of religious dance in the Christian experience. I began to discover the various possibilities to incorporate dance into worship in Catholic and Protestant traditions...and my journey has continued through these years.

"After the twenty-fifth festival, I returned home to Portland renewed in my commitments to nuture dance in the Christian community as prayer, embodiment of the Word, community expression, instrument of healing. I was shocked to discover

"We move. The fact that we have bodies that move can not plausibly be considered profane. To walk with arms reaching up to Heaven - is that so very far removed from dance? Where is the line which separates acceptable movement, procession or pageantry from unacceptable dance? Is there a quantifiable difference between the outstretched arms of a priest and that done in Sacred Dance? Where lies the essence of profanity in a leap that does not also exist in the simplest of steps? We move! It is inherent in our very being.

"That dance should be done as part of a worship service in modest dress, with reverence and with dignity, I would most certainly agree. But I cannot accept that dance - all dance - is, by its very nature, profane movement. A dark thought clouds my mind: most Sacred Dancers are women. Would Sacred Dance be viewed as profance if instead it was predominantly men, or done by priests? I wonder.

"Dance, like song, like meditation, encourages us to leave the desert of our carefully contained self which clings tenaciously to our rational constructs. These forms of worship ask more of us: they ask us not to hold tight to that rational self where we are 'in control', where we think we are 'safe' because it is familiar terrain. And yet, this is not what Christ calls us to do! He calls us to die to our ego, to follow him in ways we do not understand, to give ourself over to His Spirit. There are many paths to the soul and certainly dance, like meditation or song, is a powerful way to leave behind our rationality enough so that we may journey along this path. They teach us valuable lessons in letting go.

"And yet, we <u>are</u> a community, and there are parts of our Catholic Church community who feel that our particular form of worship is irreverant and

miss the memo as ridiculous, irrelevant, something not to be taken too seriously. And yet, I cannot. Instead I feel perplexed, as though I have given a gift to a teacher who has turned around and slapped my hands for offering it.

> "Dance in Western culture is 'tied in with love, with diversion, with profaneness, with unbridling of the senses: such dancing, in general, is not pure.'"
> (reprinted in the newsletter of the U.S. bishops' committee on the liturgy, 1982 --See National Catholic Reporter, Sept. 23, 1983)

"Sacred Dance <u>is</u> tied in with love -love of God. Should any form of worship be otherwise? Is love, for God, for a dance partner even, an evil with which we must disassociate?

"I can agree with the Catholic bishops in one sense: some forms of dancing can indeed be considered profane, irreverent, not in keeping with the spirit of Christian worship and praise. Yet this is hardly a phenomenon limited to dance - is it not also true of music, of painting, even of the spoken word? However, when we surrender these forms of expression to our belief in God we offer up, <u>not</u> profanity, but songs of joy, images of salvation, spirit-filled prayer and yes, even dances of thanksgiving; all of which are ways to praise Jesus, to honor His name.

"To banish dance categorically as a form of worship and to relegate it solely to discos and dance halls seems to be a strong statement from the Vatican of a very basic lack of trust. The Catholic Church has long encouraged the Christian expression of creativity - in writing, painting and in music. Is there no trust that we who are dancers also possess sound judgment regarding that which is worthy of offering up as prayer to God and that which is not?

presentation of gifts at his funeral mass, his 11-year-old daughter and several classmates performed a liturgical dance to celebrate her father's going home to God. It was a dance of life and hope that moved the congregation to joyful tears.

"In the recent past, Casoria's associates in the Roman curia have taken shots at prominent names such as Drinan, Schillebeeckx and Gutierrez. Now they have lowered their sights to aim at the dancers in Portland, an 11-year-old grieving daughter in Kansas City and countless men and women across the country who, like Our Lady's Juggler, have offered to the Lord's glory their graceful movements of praise.

"Casoria proves (pace Shakespeare) that ugliness is in the eyes of the beholder. He and his staff have publicly demonstrated their cultural ignorance and their sexual maladjustment. They remind us of those pastors back in the 1950s and 1960s who patrolled Catholic Youth Organization dances with a ruler to check the spacing between dancing couples.

"Because the Portland condemnation was sparked by a few letters of complaint from disgruntled Catholics, may we suggest that NCR subscribers deluge Casoria with their thoughts on the subject of liturgical dance, sincerely expressed and directly addressed to: Giuseppe Cardinal Casoria, Congregationafor the Sacraments, 00120 Vatican City State, Europe."

* REPLIES *

Comments from a Portland Sacred Dancer:

"I feel confused. I would like to shrug off the recent memo from the Archbishop of Portland curtailing Sacred Dance as an archaic idiosyncrasy of the Catholic hierarchy. I would like to dis-

"4. Future translations of the liturgy of the hours, the church's official prayer, must substitute the phrase 'silent prayer' for the word 'dancing' in the following: Psalm 30:11, Psalm 149:3, Psalm 150:4.

"Venerable brothers, we would do well to meditate often on the death of John the Bapti which a dancer caused (Matthew 14:6, Mark 6:22) and to heed carefully the example of the children in the marketplace whom Jesus cites as not dancing at the sound of pipes (Matthew 11:17, Luke 7:32).

"Be it known that this is a time for mourning, not for dancing (Ecclesiastes 3:4).

"Given at the Vatican."

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EDITORIAL

"They Shoot Liturgical Dancers, Don't They?"

"With all due respect, Cardinal Giuseppe Casoria is, at best, a middle-level executive who signs without reading letters his subordinates prepare or, at worst, a cultural ignoramus.

"In a letter to Portland, Ore., Bishop Cornelius Power in condemnation of liturgical dance in the bishop's diocese, Casoria cited a semiofficial 1975 Vatican statement that unqualifiedly declared that dance in Western culture 'is tied with love, with diversion, with profaneness, with unbridling of the senses,' and therefore cannot be part of the church's liturgy.

"Hogwash.

"But the cardinal is partially correct: dancing is tied in with love. We experienced that connection last year when a middle-aged colleague of ours died tragically of cancer. During the

which is the text's topic.

"How often, O venerable brothers, do our sacred Scriptures link dancing with tragedy? When Jephthah returned from his victory over the Ammonites, his foolish daughter danced out to meet him, thus assuring her death resulting from her father's hasty vow (Judges 11:30-40). Even more to the point, our holy books show the conjunction of dancing and worship brings ill rather than good. Rightly did Saul's daughter, Michal, criticize David's foolish performance before the ark of the covenant (2 Samuel 6:20), and righteously did Moses' anger blaze when he returned from the mountain to discover his people dancing before a golden idol (Exodus 32:19). Liturgical dancing made it easy for the remnant of Benjamin to seize the girls of Shiloh as they issued forth from the town during the time of the annual pilgrimage (Judges 21:19-21).

"In light of these incontrovertible facts revealed in God's word, we hereby make the following dispositions in regard to liturgical dancing:

"1. Angels on pinheads (in whatever number) are to confine themselves to sedate movements or, at the most, to slight swaying.

"2. On the Fourth Sunday of Advent (year C) and on the feasts of the Visitation (May 31) and of the Assumption (August 15), homilists must take care to explain that the gospel reference to the Baptist's leaping in his mother's womb is more a proof text for the pro-life movement than a brief for liturgical dance.

"3. Scripture scholars would render a great service to the cause of dignified worship by proving that the dancing heard by the elder son as he approached his father's house was merely the shuffling of guests' feet around the buffet table prepared to celebrate the prodigal's return (Luke 15:25).

follow the norm,' said Gurrieri. And within the church, the word 'norm' is equivalent to the words 'church law,' he said.

"Gurrieri said the argument cannot be made that Casoria is simply a Vatican bureaucrat, because he speaks for the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, an arm of the pope.

"The question that seems to arise first from liturgical dancers is how the Vatican stand fits in with a 1978 U.S. bishops' statement which endorsed some uses of liturgical dance within the mass. 'In light of last year's statement, I don't think that can be thrown up as an argument,' said Krisman. 'The Holy See has final authority over the liturgy.'

"Dancers, in Portland, as well as Deitering and DeSola, said they still hope they will be able to dance within the mass. If not, however, they are willing to use their talents for different forms of religious expression within the church, they said.

"'It's sad to see this happening in the Catholic church,' said Susan Cole, a Vancouver, Wash., Episcopalian and president of the National Sacred Dance Guild. 'It's going to undercut and discourage some people. They're being told that what they've understood to be meaningful is being frowned upon.'"

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(Ed. Note: Two other articles appear in the same paper and are included below.)

Vatican dance lessons by William J. Freburger

"Here is the unofficial translation of the text of an unpublished papal encyclical, scheduled for release in the near future. The document's working title, 'Passus Aversus' (A Step Backward), probably refers to the pattern of movement

drift against liturgical dance.

"Secretariat director Father John Gurrieri said that when queries are made to him about liturgical dance, he refers people to the article so they can reach their own conclusions. Pressed for an answer on how to interpret the article, Gurrieri comments: 'I would say that it prohibits dance (in the liturgy).'

"Two Catholics active in liturgical dance told NCR they were aware of the article's publication last year but said it has not yet affected them. Carolyn Deitering, a liturgical dancer and writer based in Tucson, Ariz., said that shortly after the article was published, she was asked to perform in an American cathedral. When she asked about the article, she was told by a diocesan representative 'not to worry about it, that the article was for discussion but did not outlaw liturgical dance,' Deitering said.

"Noted New York City liturgical dancer and writer Carla DeSola said she has experienced similar reactions. 'I guess I've known about it for sometime, but everybody says not to worry about it.' she said.

"Problems seem to arise -- and informed sources say the Portland archdiocese may not be the only one to have received a Vatican letter -- when critics of liturgical dance lodge complaints against it. Often, they learn about liturgical dance within the mass from articles published in local diocesan newspapers. 'The mistake is to publish pictures of those things indiocesan newspapers. That gives some people something to complain about,' said one informed liturgist.

"Casoria's letter to the Portland archdiocese seems to add another spike against liturgical dance within the mass. 'If Casoria says it doesn't follow the norm, then I guess it doesn't

"Power's memo said Casoria had written in response to a report he had received that a dance had been performed at the offertory of a mass in the Portland archdiocese. 'I asked that necessary measures be taken to avoid such a recurrence in the future so that the liturgy, especially the holy mass, may be celebrated with dignity and fervor,' Casoria wrote.

"There has been Vatican pressure on liturgical dance within the mass at least since spring 1982, when the U.S. bishops' committee on the liturgy published in its newsletter a brief paper on liturgical dance that first had appeared in 1975 Notitiae, the offical publication of the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship. The reissue had one significant difference from the original publication in the form of an introduction which declared that the document was now 'the authoritative point of reference for every discussion on the matter.'

"The unsigned article has an unmistakable point of view. It says dance in Western culture 'is tied in with love, with diversion, with profaneness, with unbridling of the senses: such dancing, in general, is not pure.

"For that reason it cannot be introduced into liturgical celebrations of any kind whatever; that would be to inject into the liturgy one of the most desacralized and desacralizing elements; and so it would be equivalent to creating an atmosphere of profaneness which would easily recall to those present and to those present and to the participants in the celebration worldly places and situations,' the article continues.

"The bishops' committee on liturgy printed the article last year 'because we were asked to do so,' said Father Ronald Krisman, associate director of the committee's secretariat. But the committee and its staff have otherwise taken a low profile with regard to this apparent Vatican

SACRED DANCE GUILD

JOURNAL

Editor's Note: In the last JOURNAL your Editor asked for comments or reports on the following article in the NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORT, September 23, 1983, Vol. 19, No. 42 issue.

From National Catholic Reporter
"Memo to diocesan newspapers: Don't run photos like this" by Gordon Oliver, Special Report Writer, Portland, Ore.

"Here's a warning to Catholic liturgical dancers: if you intend to dance during mass, make sure not too many people know about it, and try to keep newspaper photographers away.

"Why? Because Rome is sending out strong signals that liturgical dance is no longer considered proper within the mass. There has been no official statement from the Vatican on the subject, but it seems letters of complaint to Rome can prompt warnings to local bishops not to allow liturgical dance within the mass.

"A recent example occurred in the Portland archdiocese, where Archbishop Cornelius M. Power issued a Sept. 1 memo to all religious and clergy on the subject of liturgical dance. Power said in the memo that he had been informed by Cardinal Giuseppe Casoria, prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship, that 'current liturgical norms do not provide any possibility to introduce (dance) into liturgical celebrations....'